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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Assistant Director, ORE

DATE: 13 December 1949

FROM : Chief, Western Europe Division, ORE

SUBJECT: A Concept of National Intelligence Production on the Far East
(Tab A)

1. In reply to ORE Office Memorandum EPB Notice No. 2-49 the following comments are submitted:

2. Western Europe Division is of the considered opinion that the subject plan reflects little credit on CIA, in the light of the mission assigned to it by the National Security Act of 1947, and that it, therefore, places the Director in a position not only to be attacked but also to be ridiculed.

3. Western Europe Division's principal objections to the plan are as follows:

a. It creates the impression that it is designed to provide a collection of "pot-boilers" with which ORE personnel can occupy their time when not engaged in "required" production. In other words, it smacks of a relief project for unemployed research workers.

b. It appears to disregard the fact that CIA's primary mission is to produce intelligence for the highest level of policy-makers and planners, and to do so in sufficient time to allow them to take appropriate action.

c. It attacks the problem provincially instead of globally.

d. It sets forth assumptions that are inflexible, static, and extremely dangerous because they are conducive to a research rather than an intelligence point of view.

e. It calls for consideration of many basic and inherent conditions, largely to the exclusion of the constantly changing situations or developments with which strategic intelligence should concern itself.

f. It is a classic example of an academic staff study (rather than a strategic intelligence production plan) offered as a solution for an operational problem.

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In other words, it merely provides an operations officer with a fixed set of conditions in a given area so that he can plan a hypothetical campaign. It is well known that the "intelligence" services of the US jealously treasured such little numbers for years in their strongest safes. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor had an even more devastating effect upon these studies than it did on the military installations.

g. In order to become susceptible to practical application, the plan would require setting forth all possible assumptions, pertinent to a given area, so as to insure the ultimate inclusion of the correct one. This is obviously unrealistic.

h. It is an unsound approach, sometimes known as the "social science approach", to a given problem. The approach is predicated upon the concept that by accumulating all possible information on a given area or subject--and having a sufficient number of people analyze this information--one will be sufficiently informed. The main objections to this thesis are, obviously, that it is patently impossible to be sufficiently informed on any area or problem, and that, even if one were, one would still be unable to predict accurately the behavior of individuals who are capable of suddenly altering the situations on which information has been acquired.

i. If adopted, this approach to the problem would accelerate, rather than properly resist, ORE's conversion into just another academic research mill in which the personnel would devote all their time (not spent on "required" projects) to the accumulation of basic intelligence data. ORE would thus be effectively precluded from concentrating on the production of intelligence specifically designed to inform policy-makers and planners of emerging situations and developments in time to allow them to take appropriate action.

4. In view of the foregoing, it is strongly recommended that:

a. the subject plan, which was submitted to the Director on 2 December 1949, be withdrawn forthwith; and

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b. since, the Plans and Policy Staff has been unable to produce an appropriate plan, despite nine months of unnatural gestation, the EPB be directed to do so.



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Enclosure: Intelligence Production Outline

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